

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

SUPPORT STATE CHILD SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

September 19, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
S-221, The Capitol
The United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
S-230, The Capitol
The United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Reid and Senator McConnell,

This economic downturn is leaving many working families behind. As we consider ways to boost the economy, I strongly urge you to support a temporary provision to provide specific funding to preserve child support enforcement as part of an economic recovery package. Temporary federal aid will help state and local governments avoid making deeper cuts in programs that are a lifeline for families that have little to fall back on.

Child support spending is a cost-effective means to shore up family income and prevent cuts to state and local budgets that only serve to drag the economy further down. Additionally, several economists who specialize in policies that assist low-income families recommend including child support funding in an economic recovery package.


One in four children in our nation depends upon the child support enforcement program and child support income makes up 30 percent of the income of poverty-level families who receive it. When families do not receive this help, they are more likely to need public assistance. A recent poll conducted by Peter Hart Associates found that 82 percent of American women (and the majority of men) strongly support public investment in child support enforcement.

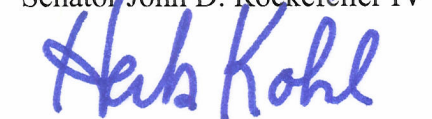
Deep child support federal spending cuts included in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 are now being implemented by state and county governments across the country. Last year, most states and counties found temporary stop-gap funding to stave off major cutbacks to child support enforcement efforts. However, this year, 19 states are reporting budget gaps in their child support programs for FY 2009. Now, some states and counties are reporting plans to lay off as many as one-third of their child support enforcement workers. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that \$1 billion in child support payments will go uncollected every year as a result of the DRA cuts. These cuts are further aggravating the economic downturn and reversing a decade of improved child support program performance.

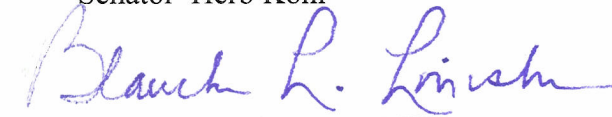
As we consider ways to address the current economic downturn, I seek your support for economy recovery to include some child support funding. The National

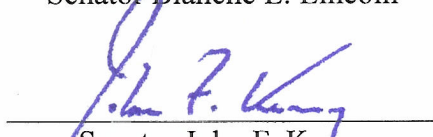
Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of Counties, the National Center on State Courts, the National District Attorneys Association and many other organizations support restoration of child support funding. This is a cost-effective program for children and families who are struggling to make ends meet.


Sincerely,



Senator John D. Rockefeller IV

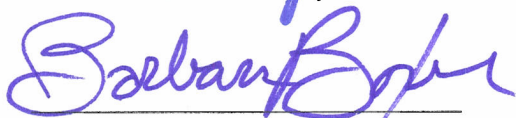

Senator Herb Kohl

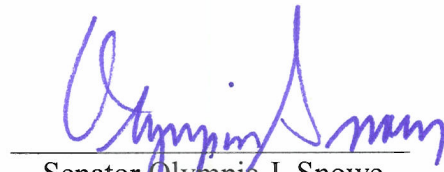

Senator Blanche L. Lincoln


Senator John F. Kerry

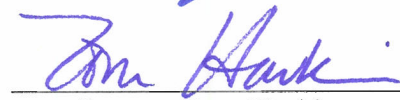

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

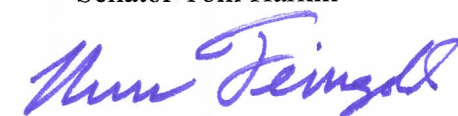

Senator Ron Wyden

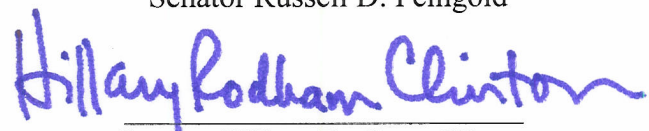

Senator Barbara Boxer

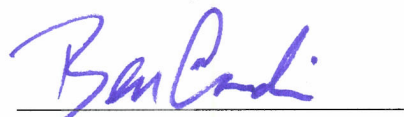

Senator Olympia J. Snowe



Senator Tim Johnson


Senator Tom Harkin


Senator Russell D. Feingold


Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton


Senator Benjamin L. Cardin

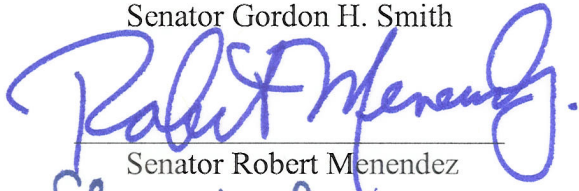

Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr.



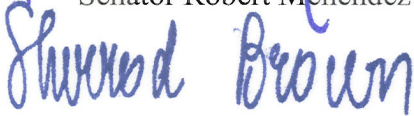
Senator Jack Reed




Senator Gordon H. Smith



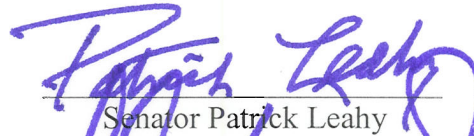
Senator Robert Menendez



Senator Mark L. Pryor



Senator Christopher S. Dodd



Senator Patrick Leahy

